

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Louisa Water Gas Emergency Response - Removal Polrep  
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region III

**Subject:** POLREP #1  
POLREP #1 AND FINAL  
Louisa Water Gas Emergency Response

Louisa, VA  
Latitude: 38.0202448 Longitude: -77.9966820

**To:** R3 RRC, EPA

**From:** Christine Wagner, OSC

**Date:** 11/30/2018

**Reporting Period:** 11/29/18-11/30/18

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	<b>Contract Number:</b>
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>
<b>Response Authority:</b> CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b> Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b> PRP	<b>Incident Category:</b> Removal Assessment
<b>NPL Status:</b> Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>
<b>Mobilization Date:</b> 11/29/2018	<b>Start Date:</b> 11/29/2018
<b>Demob Date:</b> 11/30/2018	<b>Completion Date:</b> 11/30/2018
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	<b>State Notification:</b>
<b>FPN#:</b>	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>

**1.1.1 Incident Category -**  
Emergency Response

**1.1.2 Site Description**  
Unknown vapors entering a public water distribution system

**1.1.2.1 Location**  
400-600 E. Main St., Louisa, VA

**1.1.2.2 Description of Threat**  
Threat of Fire or Explosion

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

On 11/29/18, First Responders from Louisa County responded to an alleged gas leak at a drugstore on Main St. in Louisa, VA. Responders were performing air monitoring using a 4-gas meter (LEL, OXY, CO, H2S) and a Sensis Gas Detector, designed to detect gas leaks.

Responders observed elevated readings in the public water at this facility. The responders then investigated additional businesses and the surrounding area. At different locations, the responders documented elevated readings of gasses using the gas leak detector. At one facility, the responders also observed a significant decrease in oxygen level.

Louisa County issued a "DO NOT USE" restriction on public water.

A representative from Louisa County reached out to EPA and requested assistance with identification and environmental pathway of the unknown substance in the water. EPA OSC Wagner responded.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA contacted representatives from VDEM, VDEQ, and EPA Region III Office of Water. EPA and VDEM

responded to the scene. Columbia Gas Company representatives were also on scene. The OSC activated the EPA R3 START contractor to perform sampling if needed.

A DO NOT USE order was issued for water system customers in and around the Town of Louisa at approximately 4 p.m. This order extended to all users and all uses of water. Louisa County employees followed up on a door to door basis to ensure awareness of the situation.

A mandatory evacuation order was issued at approximately 9:30 p.m. [Thursday] for those within a ½ mile radius of the Glen Marye shopping center in the town of Louisa as a precautionary measure.

VDEM and Firefighters entered the buildings of concern to perform additional air monitoring. Throughout the night, readings began to drop. Louisa County Officials made the determination to flush the public water system.

Once flushing began, air monitoring readings dropped to background levels. The evacuation order was lifted at approximately 1240 am on 11/30/18.

EPA offered air sampling assistance. However, since the levels had returned to background, air sampling was not needed.

Public water samples were collected and analyzed at the Virginia Consolidated Laboratory Services overnight. The results indicated no elevated levels of contamination.

Once flushing began, air monitoring readings dropped to background levels. The evacuation order was lifted at approximately 1240 am on 11/30/18.

A second round of water testing was performed on 11/30/18. The results again did not indicate any elevated levels of contamination. The DO NOT USE water order was lifted on 11/30.

#### **2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

The incident is under investigation by Louisa County Officials.

#### **2.1.4 Progress Metrics**

No wastes were disposed.

<i><b>Waste Stream</b></i>	<i><b>Medium</b></i>	<i><b>Quantity</b></i>	<i><b>Manifest #</b></i>	<i><b>Treatment</b></i>	<i><b>Disposal</b></i>

### **2.2 Planning Section**

#### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

EPA has offered continued assistance to Louisa County, if needed.

##### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

No additional response actions are planned at this time

##### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

Louisa County officials will continue their investigation.

##### **2.2.2 Issues**

Air monitoring equipment available to R3 OSCs will not detect methane. EPA's START response team carries a Flame Ionization Detector which will detect methane.

### **2.3 Logistics Section**

EPA's START contractor provided sampling equipment as needed

### **2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

### **2.5 Other Command Staff**

No information available at this time.

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

Town of Louisa

Louisa Fire Department

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

VDEM  
VDEQ  
VDH  
EPA

### **4. Personnel On Site**

Town of Louisa EOC and participants  
Town of Louisa Elected Officials  
VDEM  
EPA

### **5. Definition of Terms**

VDEM - Virginia Department of Emergency Management  
VDEQ - Virginia Department of Environmental Quality  
VDH - Virginia Department of Health  
START - Superfund Technical Assistance Response Team

### **6. Additional sources of information**

#### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

<http://www.nbc29.com/story/39563786/louisa-county-issues-do-not-use-order-after-finding-gas-in-water-system>  
<https://wtvr.com/2018/11/30/louisa-evacuation-lifted/>

### **7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.